



## Agency Overview

*We believe that our families can build a foundation of hope, become productive members of the community, nurturing parents and achieve all of their dreams.*

### CHILD WELFARE

For more than 18 years, SHIELDS has helped vulnerable children and families succeed. For families affected by the child welfare system, we provide a full continuum of services—from prevention to adoption. SHIELDS is a leader in the field; our work has deeply influenced Los Angeles' child-welfare initiatives, policies and procedures. Whether it is protecting a child from harm or supporting a family struggling to stay together, our programs ensure that children grow up in safe, nurturing homes.



We start with children as young as 6 weeks in our child development centers and stay with them as they grow and learn in elementary, middle and high school.

### MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

At SHIELDS, we help build healthy minds, bodies and souls. Poor mental health and poverty are inextricably linked: People living in poverty are more likely to suffer from poor mental health, and people with mental health problems are more likely to slide into poverty. And the number of children experiencing mental health problems—especially immigrant children—is on the rise. That is why we offer the community a comprehensive lineup of services in both English and Spanish that are certified by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.



### CHILDREN AND YOUTH

SHIELDS knows the value of investing in early childhood. The early years of life are among the most critical and most vulnerable for a child—a time when a child needs stability and family support. As a child enters school and adolescence, the challenges can often be overwhelming. We know that a successful family is a supported family, so we offer parents the education they need—and the support they deserve—to foster the success of their children.



### SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT

Successful, long-term recovery is the goal of our Substance-abuse Services and allows our clients to live full and productive lives. We offer nationally recognized prevention, treatment and



recovery services to a variety of clients, including women and their families, women and adolescents with co-occurring disorders, monolingual Spanish-speaking clients, and Drug Court referred clients. Programs include outpatient, day treatment, and non-traditional residential services. The well-being of children and a united family are our top priorities so we are the only organization in the nation that provides treatment and program services to the entire family, including housing.

### SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The families we serve face complex challenges in life, none of which can be addressed without focusing on their basic needs. In our program, 95% of families live below the federal poverty level, making food, clothing and shelter luxuries they struggle to afford. Whether it is a hot meal or a place to sleep for the week, we offer immediate relief to struggling families. The road to self-sufficiency is never easy, so SHIELDS stands by parents to ensure they have what they need to create nurturing homes for their children. Each day, we see families make heroic strides toward success, and we are proud to be a part of their journey.



## Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP): ASK (Ask, Seek, Knock) Program

*The Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP): ASK (Ask, Seek, Knock) Program provides services through four ASK/PIDP Family Resource Centers using a strength-based approach to empower families and provide accessibility to resources in order to strengthen families and individuals residing in SPA 6.*

The Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP): ASK (Ask, Seek, Knock) Program is SHIELDS newest program that collaborates with community partners to provide a comprehensive network of **social services, occupational, scholastic and legal resources offered through four Family Resource Centers**. Implemented in 2008, The PIDP/ASK's preventative design is one of its more innovative aspects in that families are able to receive services on a walk in basis before any involvement with the child welfare system. However DCFS families are also welcome to engage in the services provided.

### Program Highlights

- Collaborates with the Institute for Maximum Human Potential (IMHP), Wings of Refuge, Avalon-Carver Community Center, Asian American Drug Abuse Program (AADAP), West Angeles Community Development Corporation, Public Counsel Law Center, and People Who Care Youth Center.
- Through September 2010, ASK Navigators have worked with over 5,000 families.
- In total, over 19,000 linkages were made in 32 different categories of services.
- In SPA 6, ASK Resource Centers have engaged over 1,200 adult students in employment-oriented workshops and classes.

Through collaboration with partners with similar credibility in the community and DCFS, SHIELDS has been able to address the various needs of families who not only have problems including employment, legal issues, child care, personal counseling and other health needs but who have had difficulty navigating through the system in which these services can be obtained. The Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP): ASK (Ask, Seek, Knock) Program offers four community drop-in Family Recourse Centers (FRC) with English and Spanish speaking navigators that **provide linkages and referrals to community resources**. The FRCs also provides **direct service through vocational and educational services, supportive services, transportation assistance and legal referral**. In addition, in the fall of 2010, ASK opened Visitation Centers at each FRC site for families in need of monitored visitation with their children. Visitation Centers offer a safe and nurturing environment that allows families to practice reunification skills. The ASK Family Resource Centers provide **full-service referrals** to help and support the entire community; classes on a broad range of topics including **parenting, domestic violence, life skills, basic skills and employment training**. Resource Center navigators work with DCFS cases as well as clients referred and recruited from other community sources. There is no differentiation of services for DCFS-referred or walk-in clients.



One of the options for families to improve their economic success is implemented through a **vocational certification program, high school equivalency program, financial literacy workshops, entrepreneurial education, job readiness/development, legal services, and job placement**. The latter services are offered to both DCFS-referred families and non-DCFS referred families free of charge. SHIELDS for Families supplements all related costs (computers, books, notebooks, instructors, test materials, etc.) associated with the latter services to provide families with access to skill building/educational attainment to secure livable wages for economic stability.

The ASK Program has engaged the services of a Legal Services Coordinator to help **link families with attorneys and legal aid entities in the community that offer pro-bono or sliding scale counseling**. In addition, through an expansion of their partnerships, they have been able to **secure a part-time attorney to assist families with Immigration Law issues**. In the fall of 2010, this partnership will expand with the addition of a full-time attorney to assist families in the community with a range of legal needs.



## Adoption Promotion and Support Services (APSS)

*SHIELDS APSS provides comprehensive case management services, mental health and supportive resources for DCFS referred families who are considering adoption, in the adoption process, or whose adoptions have been finalized.*

The goal of SHIELDS' APSS is to increase permanency for children in SPA 6 that are involved in the adoption process. APSS provides services free of charge for families in need of adoption support or at risk of adoption disruption at any stage of the adoption process. Children in long term foster care, sibling groups, foster parents and prospective adoptive parents are provided with a spectrum of services, including **linkages to the community, parent mentoring, youth mentoring, therapy, and support groups** to help families navigate through their adoption related concerns.

Implemented in 2005 as a part of a new initiative to increase permanency for children in Los Angeles County, SHIELDS' APSS is a resource for adoptive families and families considering adoption and provides support to children and adoptive families to nurture lifetime commitments, to ensure permanency for children, to expedite the adoption process, and to reduce disruption of adoption. **Case management** services ensure a service plan designed to strengthen and preserve the child and/or family. Parents and children are empowered through information, support and skills building. Foster parents and adoptive parents play a pivotal role and they are empowered to be involved partners in directing their own permanency planning and decision making.



### Program Highlights

- Since implementation, APSS has assisted families in the finalization of 36 adoptions as well as the reunification of 4 biological families
- Parents and children are empowered through information, support and skills to be involved partners in directing their own permanency planning and decision making.



Trained to focus on adoption-related issues, APSS provides **individual, group or family therapy, mentors, and support groups for children and/or adults**. Services are available when the primary focus or concern of the child or family is adoption related. The family can be considering adoption, be in the process of adopting or a finalized adoptive family with Medi-Cal benefits.

APSS follows the model of core issues in adoption and provides all family members with information in the process of the following core issues: loss, rejection, guilt and shame, grief, identity, intimacy, mastery and control. Referrals made to the APSS program must be made by the department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)



## WHAT IS IT?

- Children & Youth Support Groups
- Caregiver Support Groups
- Grief & Loss Group
- Relaxation Techniques
- Stress Management
- Neighborhood Based Resources
- Family Bonding Roles
- Emotional Support

## WHO QUALIFIES?

- Relative Caregivers
- Youth in Kinship Care
- Medi-Cal Members

- Adjustment Educational Information
- Parenting Groups
- System Navigation Support
- Educational Resources
- Mental Health Screenings and Assessments for Children and Families

## AND IT'S FREE!!

## WHO DO I CALL?

If you would like to obtain additional information call

**Artia Brooks** (310) 413-5340

**Wendy Nuno** (310) 668-8311 or

**Melody** (323) 750-9087 ext 212

## wellness program

## CHILDCARE PROVIDED DURING GROUP SESSIONS

Services provided by  
Community Coalition  
in partnership with  
SHIELDS for Families



**SHIELDS**  
for families



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# WHAT IS AF-CBT?



**SHIELDS**  
for families



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**ALTERNATIVES FOR FAMILIES: A COGNITIVE-BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (AF-CBT) IS AN EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENT (EBT) DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CHILDREN AND PARENTS/CAREGIVERS IN FAMILIES INVOLVED IN PHYSICAL COERCION/FORCE AND CHRONIC CONFLICT/HOSTILITY.**

The content of AF-CBT is designed to address concerns about child physical abuse and/or exposure to related circumstances, such as harsh physical discipline/punishment, as well as child/family aggression and family interactions characterized by hostile interactions and conflict.

**AF-CBT seeks to both reduce caregiver/family risk factors** for physically abusive or coercive behavior and ameliorate the consequences of these experiences for children, at both the individual and family-context levels. It has also been adapted for children diagnosed with behavior problems or disorders, including Conduct Disorder (CD) and Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD).

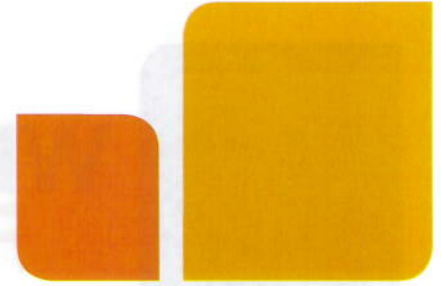
**AF-CBT incorporates several behavioral and cognitive-behavioral** methods that have been described and examined for use with physically abusive or at-risk families in several studies over the past four decades. To address both individual and family level problems, the approach draws from several conceptual models, including behavioral and learning theory, cognitive therapy, family-systems therapy, and developmental victimology.

AF-CBT emphasizes training in both intrapersonal and interpersonal skills designed to enhance self-control, promote positive family relations, and reduce violent behavior. Its primary techniques include affect regulation, behavior management, social skills training, cognitive restructuring/problem-solving, and communication.



Common treatment goals include reducing a caregiver's level of anger and use of force, promoting non-aggressive (alternative) discipline strategies, minimizing family risks for re-abuse, enhancing a child's coping skills, and encouraging non-aggressive family problem-solving and communication.

[www.afcbt.org](http://www.afcbt.org)



# EDUCATE ENGAGE INSPIRE

## THE TECHNIQUES THAT MAKE UP AF-CBT AIM TO:

- Strengthen positive parenting practices
- Improve family cohesion/communication
- Enhance children's coping and social skills
- Promote healthy family functioning
- Prevent further instances of coercion and aggression

With its integration of both individual and joint sessions, AF-CBT is suitable for application by trained practitioners in individual, parent-child or family, and group sessions across diverse outpatient, residential, and home settings. The techniques, relevant handouts, training examples, and outcome measures are integrated in a structured approach designed to enhance accessibility to practitioners and supervisors.

Formerly known as Abuse-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, the method was developed by David J.

Kolko, Ph.D., ABPP, and updated in collaboration with Amy D. Herschell, Ph.D., Barbara L. Baumann, Ph.D., and Meghan Shaver, M.S.W. AF-CBT was renamed to more clearly reflect its focus on specific skills training in different domains and application to a broader population of families. Specifically, the name was also changed because the term "abuse" applies to a minority of the families who are referred for AF-CBT and, even if applicable, may create treatment engagement obstacles by accentuating client defensiveness and self-perceptions of being stigmatized.

## SHIELDS for families



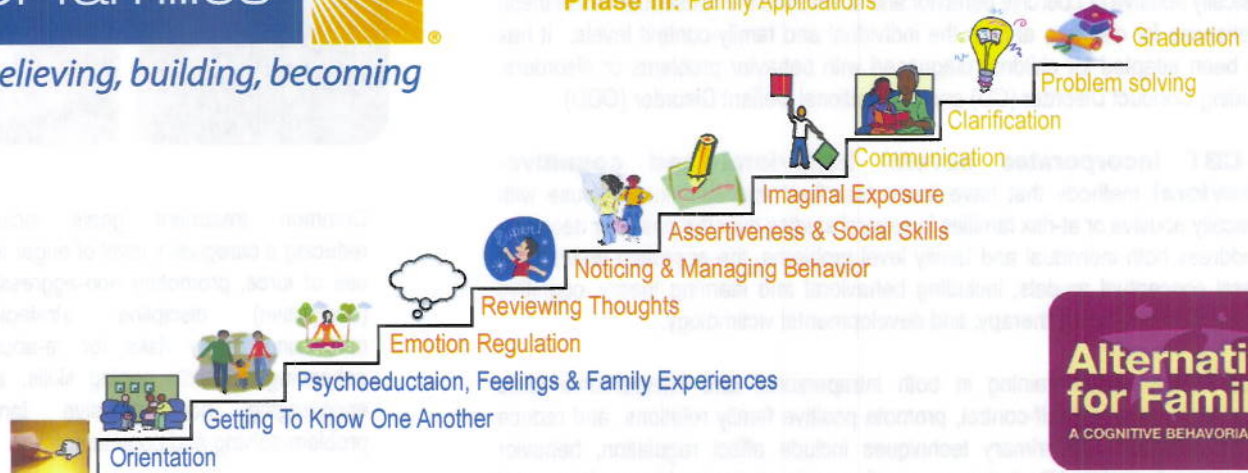
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### STEPS OF AF-CBT

**Phase I:** Engagement and Psychoeducation

**Phase II:** Individual Skill Building

**Phase III:** Family Applications



## Alternatives for Families

A COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

[www.afcbt.org](http://www.afcbt.org)